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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~A method comprising:~~ The method according to claim 26 and wherein said tracking comprises:

electronically receiving new ownership information about at least one retail product item to be physically transferred to a new owner;
electronically registering ownership of said at least one retail product item to said new owner; and
when requested, providing verification that an-a retail entity selling a retail product item of interest is registered as the owner of said retail product item.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1 and wherein said electronic transferring comprises communicating along a substantially secure communications line.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 and also comprising having a unique article number assigned to each said at least one itemretail product.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 3 and also comprising having said unique article number encoded.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 3 and also comprising having said unique article number encoded as a bar code.

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 and wherein said retail entity is a store.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A method comprising:~~ The method according to claim 26 and wherein said tracking comprises:

registering ownership of at least one retail product item when said at least one itemretail product is physically transferred to a new owner;
receiving a an itemretail product identification code associated with an itemretail product to be verified from a possible owner; and

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generating a certificate of authenticity of said itemretail product to be verified if said itemretail product identification code is registered to said possible owner.

8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 7 and wherein said itemretail product identification code comprises a unique article number assigned to each said at least one itemretail product.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 7 and wherein said possible owner comprises a store.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 7 and wherein said receiving comprises communicating along a substantially secure communications line.

11. (Currently Amended) A counterfeit detection method comprising:

reading a label on an itemretail product; and
providing a certificate of authenticity of said itemretail product if an identification code encoded in said label and identifying said itemretail product is registered by a third party authority to a store from which said itemretail product was bought.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 11 and wherein said electronically reading comprises scanning said label with a bar code reader.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 11 and wherein said identification code is one of the following code types: one-dimensional bar code, two-dimensional bar code, RFID tag and a magnetic tag.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 11 and wherein said providing occurs at said store.

15. (Currently Amended) A counterfeit detection method comprising:

in a store, electronically reading a label on a desired itemretail product;
transmitting a an itemretail product identification code encoded in said read label to an authentication unit;

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receiving an indication from said authentication unit whether or not said itemretail product identification code is registered to said store; and if said indication is positive, generating a certificate of authenticity for said desired itemretail product.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 15 and wherein said electronically reading comprises scanning said label with a bar code reader.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 15 and wherein said identification code is one of the following code types: one-dimensional bar code, two-dimensional bar code, RFID tag and a magnetic tag.

18. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a storage unit to store information about authentic itemretail products and their authorized owners; and
a unit to receive queries regarding an itema retail product and a holder of said itemretail product and to provide verification of authenticity of said itemretail product, if said holder is registered in said storage unit as the authorized owner of said itemretail product.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18 and also comprising an update unit to register a change in said authorized owner.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18 and also comprising a communications unit to communicate with said owners along a substantially secure communications line.

21. (Original) A point of sale unit capable of communicating said queries to the apparatus of claim 18.

22. (Currently Amended) A point of sale unit comprising:

a reader to read a label attached to aan itemretail product; and
a unit to query an authentication unit to certify that the authorized owner of said itemretail product is the owner registered in said point of sale unit.

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23. (Original) The unit according to claim 22 and also comprising a display unit to display verification or denial of authenticity, according to results of said query.

24. (Original) The unit according to claim 22 and also comprising a printer to print a certificate of authenticity, if said results of said query are positive.

25. (Original) The unit according to claim 22 and wherein said reader comprises one of the following readers: a one-dimensional bar code reader, a two-dimensional bar code reader, an RFID tag reader, and a magnetic tag reader.

26. (New) A method comprising:

tracking title to retail products.